AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

- 1. (Currently Amended) A method of removing contamination from a Fischer-Tropsch derived hydrocarbon stream, the method comprising:
 - a) filtering a Fischer-Tropsch derived hydrocarbon stream with a conventional filter to remove contamination having an average size greater than or equal to about 1 micron to produce a filtered hydrocarbon stream;
 - passing the filtered hydrocarbon stream to at least one distillation step to a first distillation step and a second distillation step, the first distillation step producing a first overhead stream and a first bottoms stream, and the second distillation step producing a second overhead stream and a second bottoms stream, wherein the first and second distillation steps remove contamination present as soluble species or as ultra-fine particulate from the filtered hydrocarbon stream, the distillation step producing a distillate product stream and a bottoms fraction, wherein the contamination is substantially concentrated in the second bottoms fraction; and
 - c) recovering the bottoms fraction from the <u>second</u> distillation step, wherein the amount of the bottoms fraction is less than about 35 percent by volume of the filtered hydrocarbon stream.
- 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of the bottoms fraction is less than about 15 percent by volume of the filtered hydrocarbon stream.
- 3. (Cancelled)
- 4. (Cancelled)

- 5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the distillation step is carried out in a vacuum distillation column.
- 6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the contamination is derived from a Fischer-Tropsch catalyst.
- 7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the distillate step removes soluble contamination from the Fischer-Tropsch derived hydrocarbon, the soluble contamination being derived from a Fischer-Tropsch catalyst.
- 8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the soluble contamination comprises a material selected from the group consisting of aluminum, cobalt, titanium and iron.
- 9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least about 70 percent by weight of the contamination present in the filtered hydrocarbon stream is isolated in the bottoms fraction.
- 10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least about 85 percent by weight of the contamination present in the filtered hydrocarbon stream is isolated in the bottoms fraction.
- 11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the Fischer-Tropsch derived hydrocarbon stream is a C₃₊ product.
- 12. (Original) The method of claim 1, further including passing the distillate product stream to a hydroprocessing reactor having a hydroprocessing catalyst.
- 13. (Cancelled)
- 14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[13]] 1, wherein the first overhead stream has a range of boiling points less than about 800 to 950°F, and the first bottoms stream has a range of boiling points greater than about 800 to 950°F.

- 15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[13]] 1, wherein the first overhead stream is passed to the hydroprocessing reactor, and the first bottoms stream is passed to the second distillation step.
- 16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[13]] 1, wherein the second distillation step comprises a vacuum distillation, and the second bottoms stream has an initial boiling point of greater than about 1000°F.
- 17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[13]] 1, wherein the second overhead stream is passed to the hydroprocessing reactor.
- 18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[13]] 1, wherein the second bottoms stream is less than about 15 percent by volume of the Fischer-Tropsch derived hydrocarbon stream.
- 19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[13]] 1, further including the step of treating the second bottoms stream with a treatment selected from the group consisting of dispensing the second bottoms stream in crude oil, passing the second bottoms stream to a third distillation step, processing the second bottoms stream into a fuel, and recycling the second bottoms stream in a recycling operation.